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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

As indicated below, Applicant is amending Claims 1–4, 7–13, 15–17, 19–23, 25–27, 29 and 30.

1. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of groups of network computing devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:
 - a plurality of backup cells each comprising:
 - a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of groups of network computing devices;
 - a management manager component, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data to the backup device; and
 - each of the plurality of backup cells communicatively coupled to at least one other backup cell among the plurality of backup cells, and each of the plurality of backup cells configurable to be controlled by a management manager component in another backup cell among the plurality of backup cells.
2. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 1, wherein the backup device is controllable from the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells.
3. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 1, wherein the backup device is controllable from the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells via the management manager component in the same backup cell as the backup device.
4. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a first group of network computing devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:
 - a first backup cell comprising:
 - at least one backup device executing a backup of the data stored on the first group of network computing devices;

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a first manager component, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device;

a second backup cell communicatively coupled to the first backup cell, the second backup cell comprising:

a second manager component; and

the second manager component directly controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device.

5.-6. (Canceled).

7. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 4, the network computing system comprising a first network computing device, wherein the first manager component is a software module executing on the first network computing device, and the second manager component is a software module executing on the second network computing device.

8. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 7, the network computing system further comprising a second network computing device, wherein the second manager component executes on the second network computing device.

9. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 7 wherein the second manager component executes on the first network computing device.

10. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a first group of network computing devices containing data, the network computing system further comprising a first network computing device, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

at least one backup device executing backup functions for the data contained on the first group of network computing devices;

a first manager component executing on the first network computing device, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device; and

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a second manager component, communicatively coupled to the first network computing device, the second manager component directly controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device.

11. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10 wherein the second management manager component executes on the first network computing device.

12. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10, the network computing system further comprising a second network computing device, wherein the second management manager component on the first network computing device.

13. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10, the network computing system further comprising a second group of network computing devices containing data, wherein the second management manager component controls a backup of the data contained on the second group of network computing devices.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 10, wherein the backup device is controllable from the second management manager component via the first management manager component.

16. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a first group of network computing devices containing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

at least one backup device executing backup functions for the data contained on the first group of network computing devices;

a first network computing device, communicatively coupled to the at least one backup device, controlling the backup of the data contained on the first group of network computing devices to the at least one backup device; and

a second network computing device, communicatively coupled to the first network computing device, the second network computing device directly controlling the backup of the data to the at least one backup device.

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17. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 16, the network computing system further comprising a second group of network computing devices containing data, wherein the second network computing device controls a backup of the data contained on the second group of network computing devices.

18. (Canceled).

19. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 16, wherein the second network computing device controls the backup of the data to the at least one backup device via the first network computing device.

20. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of network computing devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

a plurality of backup cells comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of network computing devices;

a management manager component, residing on and configured to execute on any network computing device and communicatively coupled to at least one backup device, for controlling the backup of the data to the backup device; and

means for communicatively coupling to at least one other backup cell, whereby the first backup cell is capable of being controlled by a management manager component in the other backup cell.

21. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

22. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells via the management manager component in the first backup cell.

23. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of network

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computing devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising a plurality of one or more backup cells comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of network computing devices;

a media component, configured to reside and to execute on any network computing device including a first network computing device, communicatively coupled to at least one backup device for controlling the backup of the data to the backup device;

a client component, configured to reside on and execute on any network computing device including a second network computing device and communicatively coupled to at least one media component, directing the media component to backup the data according to operational parameters established by the client component;

a management manager component, configured to reside on and execute on any network computing device including a third network computing device and communicatively coupled to at least one client component, directing the client component to backup the data according to backup parameters of the backup cell established by the management manager component; and

means for communicatively coupling each of the plurality of backup cells to at least one other of the plurality of backup cells, and each of the plurality of backup cells configurable to be controlled by a management manager component in another backup cell of the plurality of backup cells.

24. (Canceled).

25. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells to control the client component.

26. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 20, comprising means for the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells to control the client component via the management manager component in the same backup cell as the client component.

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27. (Currently Amended) A backup and retrieval system for a network computing system, the network computing system comprising a plurality of network computing devices storing data, the backup and retrieval system comprising:

a plurality of backup cells comprising:

a backup device executing a backup of the data stored on at least one of the plurality of network computing devices;

a management manager component, residing on and configured to run on any network computing device and communicatively coupled to at least one backup device, for controlling the backup of the data to the backup device; and

means for communicatively coupling to at least one other backup cell, whereby the first backup cell is capable of being controlled by a management manager component in the other backup cell.

28. (Canceled).

29. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 27, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells.

30. (Currently Amended) The backup and retrieval system of claim 27, comprising means for controlling the backup device in a first backup cell from the management manager component in another of the plurality of backup cells via the management manager component in the first backup cell.